

# Bureau of Land Management- Montana/Dakotas State Office

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## **Bridging the Divide: A Natural and Cultural Resources Field Camp for Tribal High School Youth**

Bridging the Divide (BTD) is a Native American cultural and natural resource awareness program sponsored by the Bureau of Land Management and the USDA Forest Service. The program ties together several disparate threads of modern and traditional native life through an integrated classroom and outdoor field camp experience.

Project Goals:

- 1) Integrate traditional cultural knowledge into a curriculum which emphasizes ecology, ecosystems, and cultural landscapes.
- 2) Bring students and tribal elders together in the classroom and in the field to learn traditional knowledge, skills, and language elements, while being reacquainted with aboriginal territories and tribal treaty rights.
- 3) Instill students with a conservation/stewardship ethic for public lands resources.
- 4) Expose students to potential career opportunities in the management of cultural and natural resources both in federal and tribal government.

Project Timeline: Annual Summer School and Field Camp Program  
2010 Field Camp – Wet Meadow Ecosystems and Camas  
2011 Field Camp – Sagebrush Steppe Ecosystems and Bitterroot/Sage Grouse  
2012 Field Camp – Riparian Ecosystems and Willow/West Slope Cutthroat Trout

Current Partnerships: Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Ft. Hall Reservation, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation, Bureau of Land Management-Montana/Dakotas State Office, USDA Forest Service-Beaverhead Deerlodge National Forest, University of Montana-Western, Shoshone-Bannock Jr./Sr. High School – Ft. Hall, ID, Two Eagle River School - Pablo, MT.

Opportunities for further collaboration with AIHEC: Tribal High schools are “feeder” schools to AIHEC members. Partnership with AIHEC may provide college students in education programs with exposure to advanced curriculum development, working with tribal colleges may enable more advance high school participants to earn college credits.



Tribal high-school students Jacie B. and Marcia C. clean bitterroot during a BLM-USDA Forest Service-funded field camp near Dillon, Mont. Part of the “Bridging the Divide,” program, the camp examines landscapes and ecosystems in the context of both modern science and cultural tradition. Photo by BLM.